श्री कमालुद्दीन अहमद : सर, जो एक्सपोर्ट ज्वैलरी प्रमोशन काउंसिल है, उससे हमारा लगातार संपर्क रहता है और उनकी जो-जो कठिनाइयां किसी रूप में आती हैं तो उन्हें ठीक करते हैं । इसके अलावा उससे हटकर जो-जो सुविधाएं वह चाहते हैं उनको देखकर हम वैसे एक्शन लेकर उनको सुविधाएं उपलब्ध करवाते हैं । अध्यक्ष जी, पिछले साल लिबरलाइजेशन के बाद काफी चेंजेज आए हैं, क्वालिटीज में चेंजेज लाए गए हैं और इस वक्त उनको किसी किस्म की कोई प्रॉब्लम नहीं है ।

SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Sir as you are aware, gold is laying in the Kolar Gold Fields, without being sent to the market, with the result that the workers are put to a lot of trouble. They are not being paid the daily wages for the past two months. That is why I would like to know whether the Minister will send the gold or the gold ornaments to foreign countries.

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED : Sir, it pertains to mines.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It pertains to mines. It doesn't come under this question. Question No. 226, Mr. Narayanasamy.

Paradeep Phosphates Limited

*226. SHRI V. NARAYANSAMY :
SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDEY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Paradeep Phosphates Limited has been closed down;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what measures Government have taken to rehabilitate the affected workers?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALIERO) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : Sir, the hon. Minister has given a standard answer. [*Interruptions*] ... A standard reply was given by the hon. Minister. Sir, my specific question is whether the Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. has been closed, what the reasons are and what actions are being taken for rehabilitation of the employees. The Minister said, "No, Sir. Does not arise." This is a clear case of the hon. Minister being misled by the bureaucrats.

*The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri V. Narayanasamy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you mean to say that it has not been closed ?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : It has been closed. [*Interruptions*] ... Let me come to that aspect. Sir, Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. was closed for four months and it was reopened about fifteen or twenty days ago. If the hon. Minister was sincere enough, he should have told the House the fact that it was closed and that it was reopened about twenty days ago. But the reply is concealing the factum of closure of that unit. I would like to seek some clarifications from him. What are the reasons for the closure of the Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. ? About 2,300 employees are working there, including the contract labour. Are you going to employ all of them ? Are you going to retain them ? What is the fate of the employees ? It is a public limited company. The Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. is the biggest unit in the country. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what his future plan of action is after reopening this factory.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : Sir, the hon. Member is right. The factory was closed. It is not closed now and, therefore, we replied. [*Interruptions*] ... That is a matter of opinion on, but I am agreeing with you. It was closed. The DAP unit at Paradeep suspended production from first of April to 19th of July and the production has resumed now and from 20th of July it has been working. So, the question of retrenchment doesn't arise. The workers will be there and the company will go on. The reason why it was closed was the great difficulty of economic unviability that the entire DAP industry found itself in, particularly after the unified rate of exchange came in, because the official rate of exchange benefit which was there for import of phosphoric acid and ammonia ceased to be available with the coming into force of the unified rate. Why did they close and why did they reopen ? They reopened because the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, decided that our industry must exist, our industry must subsist, and, therefore, a subsidy of Rs. 1,000 was given for the indigenously produced DAP. With that much of subsidy, they must be able to compete with the imported DAP and that is what we are doing now. They are competing on a level ground. That is how all these industries, including Paradeep, have resumed production. All the industries have resumed excluding, if I may mention, the Haldia unit of Hindustan Lever which was closed from 4th of June. Now they

have given a rough indication that somewhere around September they will reopen. They are closed now because they were the last to close. They closed much after others. Therefore, they have stopped production. Whatever it is that is their reason and that is the information given to us. The position, therefore, is that the indigenous DAP industry, by and large—I mean all units except one—is now in production for the reasons that I have mentioned.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: What about the employees?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I have asked about the employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He said that the employees are working. ... [*Interruptions*] ... All of them are working. The Minister has answered.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I have asked about the contract labour also. I want an assurance from the hon. Minister. He said only about the employees.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: He must give more details. Then I will look into it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, this factory was opened on the representation made by the Members of Parliament and also by the Orissa Government and by the intervention of the hon. Prime Minister. That I would like to bring on record.

Sir, there is another problem. The price of imported phosphate is less than the one produced locally. That is the problem the hon. Minister is facing now. Since the quality is inferior in India, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to adopt modern technology for the purpose of improving the quality of phosphate so that they will be able to compete in the international market and minimise the production costs.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: The hon. Member is quite right. Rock phosphate in the country is of a lower grade. But whatever information is given to us, there is no way in which it can be made of the grade which is available internationally and which we import. That is number one. Number two, the quantity of phosphate of any grade available in the country is not sufficient to meet our requirements. Therefore, our industry suffers from this basic difficulty that it has to import raw materials or intermediates. There is some complaint about dumping of DAP also. The intermediates or the raw materials are more expensive than the finished products. That is how there are some complaints about dumping. What I mean by that is the inherent disadvantage under which the DAP industry in the country labours and works.

SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is fact that the Government is trying to renovate this factory because it is a coal-based factory and the Government wants to renovate it and turn it into a petroleum-based factory. That is why it was closed down. The Government also wanted to retrench a large number of workers because the Government thought that workers would not be able to cope with the new technology. Is it a fact?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, as the House knows, it was a joint venture with the Government of Nauru. Very recently we have taken over the shares from the Nauru Government. Having done that, we are now looking out a way for restructuring the company financially and improving on its management. The position, however, is that, that company is now producing and is working.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: The Minister has said that the fertilizer industries producing DAP are working well with the subsidy which is being given by the Government of India, i.e. Rs. 1000 per tonne. Sir, many industries are not able to effectively continue the production with the subsidy of Rs. 1000. The indigenous production should be given preference by the Government over allowing imports resulting in 50,000 workers losing jobs. The technology and industry which we have developed indigenously will be profitable in the long run even though the immediate price of fertilizer which is being dumped into this country by international companies at the instance of their Governments may be lower. This aspect must be looked into. Will the Government consider this aspect also?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: The thinking of the Government on this issue is that the indigenous industries must be supported. For the reasons mentioned by the hon. Members and for other reasons, we as a large country, the

second largest in the world in terms of fertilizers consumption cannot be dependent on foreign supplies for our agriculture, if at all foreign supplies of those dimensions are available. That is number one. Number two, the Government is also thinking that when we support indigenous industries, we must see that indigenous industries run efficiently. Therefore, incentive for efficiency and disincentive for inefficiency must be the rule.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Sir, there is time to get a correct reply from the hon. Minister. The whole problem is that this phosphate industry is bound to be closed down. It may be working today. But in course of time it is bound to be closed down because of the two policy decisions taken by the Government. One is, decontrol of phosphate industry and the second is decanalisation of import of DAP and other phosphate fertilizers. The Joint Parliamentary Committee on Fertilizer made a number of recommendations to strengthen the indigenous industries. I would like to know from the Government whether they are going to renew this policy of decontrol and decanalisation of phosphate fertilizer because then only the indigenous industry will survive. These are all *ad hoc* measures. They will not in any way help in the survival of the indigenous industries. I would like to have a specific answer from the hon. Minister.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, the hon. Member speaks about decontrol, decanalisation and also about the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Fertilizer. The fact is that it was the JPC who recommended decontrol.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: What about other recommendations?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: They are already there.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: The JPC made number of recommendations. They have taken up only one ... [*Interruptions*] ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister reply ... [*Interruptions*] ...

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: We have not taken up only one. We have taken up several of them. Many recommendations were there. We have also reduced the price of Urea and Nitrogen based fertilizers by 10 per cent. We have done it. Customs duty on import of Phosphoric acid is reduced. We have done it and so on and so forth. We have implemented several others and that is the position I should say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Project in the Areas of Robotics

*227. SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the projects in the areas of robotics, surface mounted technology, transputer based instrumentation etc. which are being undertaken under the Indo-EC Co-operation;

(b) what is the stage at which these projects lie;

(c) what is the total outlay of these projects; and

(d) what is the nature of Indo-EC Co-operation in these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (d) Areas of co-operation identified in the Indo-EEC Memorandum of Technical Co-operation, signed in October 1990, include robotics, Surface Mount Technology and Transputer based instrumentation project. Specific project proposals in each of these areas have been posed for assistance in European Community and are under their consideration.

As an interim measure of co-operation in the areas of robotics and transputer, European Economic Community (EEC) has been providing assistance in the form of training and consultancy for the Indian projects. In the area of Surface Mount Technology, the consultants appointed by the EEC have submitted the feasibility study for a project which is being evaluated.